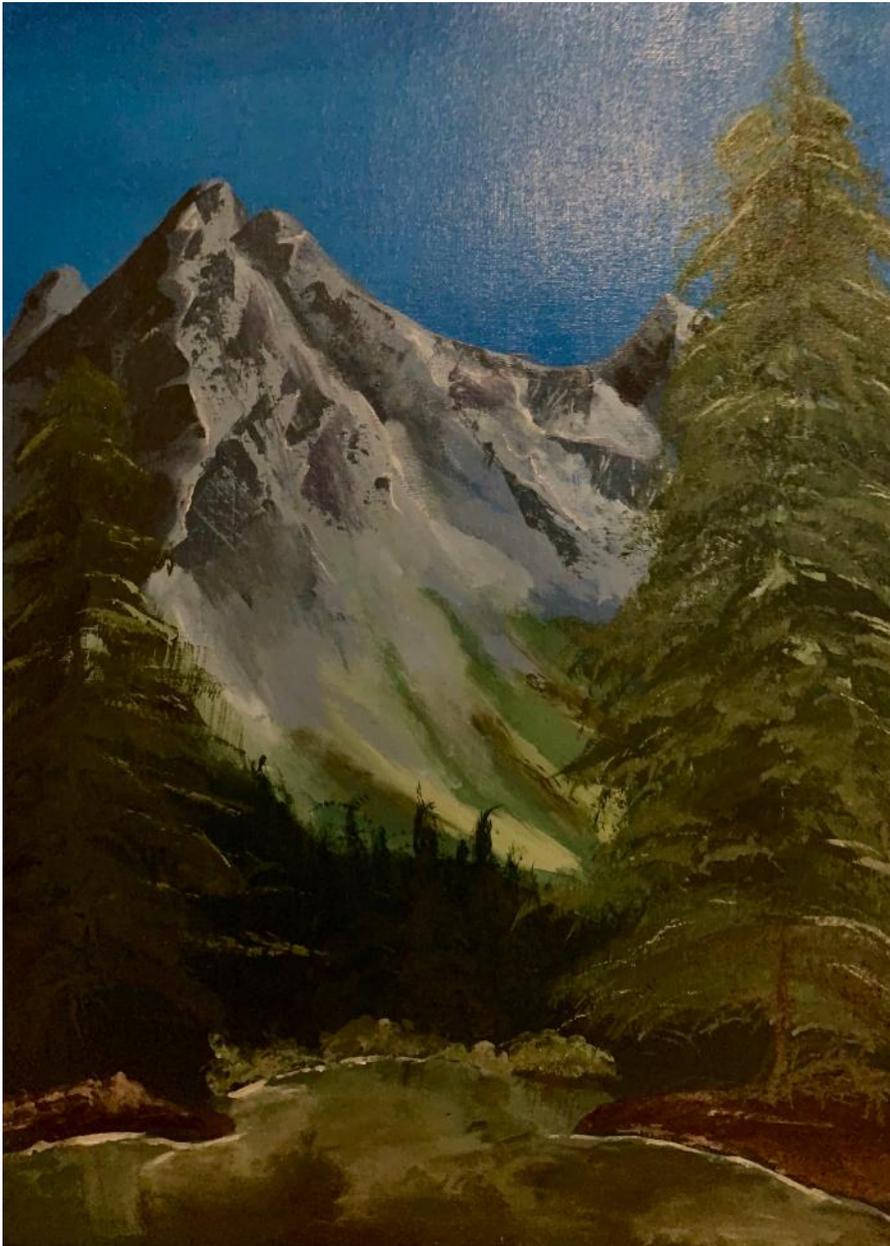




SUMMER 2020 NEWSLETTER



Dream State by Juliana Seedorf

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A Message From the Program Coordinator

Since our last newsletter, a lot has changed. We have been trying to come to grips with navigating rough waters that life has thrown at us. We've all had to adapt to staying inside for prolonged periods of time, taking classes through a screen, quickly switching over to an extreme amount of technology to supplement our jobs, having limited interaction with friends and family, and getting our masks on to go into a store.

While this reality sounds scary or sad at times, I'm not choosing to see the glass half empty, but rather hold

optimism for what's to come. I've been able to see your smiling faces on our "Film it Fridays" while we discussed wildlife, the process behind the scenes of Avalon Nature Preserve, brackish water environments, and sharing some of my own experiences with you. I have always started each call out with "How is everyone doing?" just to make sure you knew it is ok to feel frustrated, overwhelmed, bittersweet or anything else. Even though it was probably the toughest

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Students did their own beach cleanups and submitted their data to the Rozalia organization

"Oil Spill in Mauritius" By Ashley Liu

Water pollution is greatly caused by imperfect water treatments, or legal and illegal discharges from factories. Through natural instances, such as wind and storms, debris is sent into waterways. However, humans are another source of this issue, where the causes range from littering to spills of oil pipelines/ fracking systems. In fact, there has been a recent oil spill off the coast of Mauritius, in the Indian Ocean. On the island's southeastern coast, a grounded ship contained nearly 4,000 tons of fuel oil and 200 tons of diesel on board. According to the Mauritian environment minister, Kavydass Ramano, oil reached their island nation that had relied on the surrounding waters for fishing and tourism. Not only did it affect the lifestyles of many individuals, it triggered an environmental crisis; this can be seen in pictures of the spill making its

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“The Last Deer in the Forest”

By James Flockhart

The morning air smelt of dew and a fresh chilliness. The dense woods had an adolescent nature to them as if they hadn't been touched by the unforgiving touch of man. The leaves on the trees looked an amber color like they had been slightly toasted upon the fire. A small clearing in the woods was full of blue baptisia australis, yellow butterfly milkweed, purple rosa palustris, and a red winterberry plant. The assortment of elegant flowers were doused in golden honey by the sun. It looked like a rainbow of nature that could only be explained by a higher power. A deer walked into the clearing it's beady eyes staring at English ivy that sat on the corner of the clearing. The deer was now doused in the honey-like sunlight. The deer bent its majestic head it's white spots on its body looking like drops of milk upon a wooden countertop. The deer put it's head back up a piece of english ivy still in it's mouth. The deer exited the beautiful scene entering the adolescent dense woods once more. The deer entered another clearing in the woods. The clearing wasn't almighty, like the previous, but was full of a thick black smoke that made

the air dense like molasses. The grass in the clearing was an unhealthy yellow and grey. In the center of the clearing a large metal house sat it's aesthetic disrupting nature's beauty. The deer walked cautiously over to the front door. A bush full of blueberries sat next to the doorway. The plant looked malicious and had a faint green glow to it. The branches of the plant looked like burnt barbed wire. The door opened revealing a plump man wearing a red plaid flat hat who had a bushy mustache and rat-like face. The deer jumped startled by the entrance of the man. "Oh... my god." The man had a look of pure awe on his face. "A deer!" The man ran back inside. "Honey! Honey! You can't believe what I just saw!" "What! What! Did you see a robot with three heads or something Jerald!" said a sarcastic voice of an older woman. The deer ran out the clearing leaving four black prints behind. In the distance the voices of the man and women could be heard. "That wasn't funny

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A Message From the Program Coordinator (Continued)

challenge, you all rose to the occasion. You finished the school year, a handful of you graduated, you might have had to skip out on summer camp, a vacation, or a job, but you are happy and healthy- that is most important.

To see the participation in the virtual events as well as our Summer Educational Activities Series has brought me a lot of joy. I'm so happy you are getting involved and making the most of your experience with Avalon. And it has been fun for me to deliver these programs!

I hope to see you all soon as we wait for what the fall brings.

Kayla

The Last Deer in the Forest (Continued)

Jerald!" "No- I s-swear he was right here." he responded "Must've been a trick of the light." the women said. "I guess you're right." The man responded with a distinct air of melancholy in his voice."



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

This year, the Long Island Sound Study launched a bioblitz to take place as a citizen/community science event. A bioblitz is a biological survey that anyone can do by recording as many living species as possible in a given time frame and area. The objective is to record different findings rather than taking an inventory of individuals. Our student volunteers went out to coastal areas and recorded their data using the iNaturalist app, which tags your location & gps coordinates, the time of your observation,

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Sign Up on Our Website if You Are Interested in These Projects/Events!

Oil Spill in Mauritius (Continued)

way into the clear blue waters of the country's blue lagoons. Seen as this is the first time the nation faced this catastrophe, they were insufficiently equipped to respond to this situation. The island- home to rare/ endangered species, tropical forests, sandy beaches, and mountains- was already struggling to attract tourists, due to the pandemic. Now, with the addition of the risks in oil, oceans and biodiversity are severely threatened. The company that owns the oil ship, Nagashiki Shipping, made it unclear whether they planned to pay for cleaning, or give compensation for any harm. Either way, oil spills are incredibly harmful to species that come in contact with these polluted regions. The period of time for recovery can also take years.



LISS Coastal Bioblitz (Continued)

and you can upload photos. The app then analyzes the photos and suggests a species ID or classification for the organism. Other users can suggest what they think your observation is and once you agree on the common & scientific name, your data is considered research grade for any scientist, professional, teacher or anyone to use! iNaturalist is a worldwide tool, however this particular bioblitz was just on Long Island only, so that the LI Sound Study organization staff could retrieve everyone's data. These submissions will be used to contribute to biodiversity monitoring efforts and in identifying invasive species and conserving native ones. Our student volunteers made some awesome observations, including a tagged horseshoe crab and a nesting diamondback terrapin! And of course on land, there were no shortage of deer!

The LISS had **7,111 observations** made with a total of **1,637 species** identified in a two-week period! They plan on expanding and making this an annual event!



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